



Department of Justice

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DUTCH CITIZEN CHARGED IN TERRORISM CONSPIRACY AGAINST AMERICANS IN IRAQ

WASHINGTON, D.C. - An Iraqi-born Dutch citizen has been charged by criminal complaint with participating in a conspiracy to attack Americans based in Iraq, the Department of Justice announced today.

The criminal complaint, filed at U.S. District Court in the District of Columbia on Wednesday, July 27, charges Wesam Al Delaema, a/k/a Wesam Khalaf Chayed Delaeme, with four counts: conspiracy to kill U.S. citizens abroad; conspiracy to use a weapon of mass destruction (explosives); possession of a destructive device (explosives) during a crime of violence; and conspiracy to possess a destructive device (explosives) during a crime of violence. These are the first U.S. criminal charges connected to terrorist activities in Iraq.

Delaema, 32, was born in Fallujah, Iraq. He was arrested by Dutch law enforcement authorities on May 2, 2005 and was facing similar charges in that country. Since his arrest, Dutch law enforcement and prosecution authorities have worked cooperatively with the FBI in its investigation of Delaema's alleged terrorist activities. On Wednesday night, the United States informed the Dutch authorities of its intention to request Delaema's extradition to face the charges filed here. Today in court in the Netherlands, Dutch authorities announced that Delaema had been transferred into extradition custody in response to the request from the United States.

The criminal complaint alleges that Delaema traveled from the Netherlands to Iraq in October 2003, with a group of co-conspirators calling themselves the "Fighters of Fallujah," who declared their intentions to kill Americans in Iraq using explosives. The complaint further alleges that Delaema and his co-conspirators hid explosives and detonating cords in a road in the area of Fallujah, Iraq.

"We use all the tools available to us to ensure that justice is brought to those who seek to kill Americans serving and working in Iraq," said John C. Richter, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Department's Criminal Division. "In this case, thanks

to the valuable assistance provided by our Dutch allies, this man will be held accountable for his actions.”

“This prosecution serves notice that we will make full use of the laws and resources of our criminal justice system to defend Americans, and particularly members of our armed forces, against terrorist insurgents in Iraq and elsewhere,” said U.S. Attorney Kenneth L. Wainstein of the District of Columbia. “We thank the Dutch authorities for their tremendous cooperation, and we look forward to working closely with them to ensure that justice is done in this case.”

“The FBI has aggressively investigated this matter and certainly desires to see Wesam Khalaf Chayed Delaeme come before the bar of justice for his plans to kill Americans in Iraq,” said Michael A. Mason, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI’s Washington Field Office. “Terrorists will continually seek to thwart the efforts of law enforcement and intelligence communities by maintaining a high level of mobility. It is only through the leverage of international cooperation that such individuals can be assured of having to answer for their crimes.”

The investigation into this matter was conducted by the FBI’s Washington Field Office, with assistance from the Dutch National Police Agency, the National Office of the Public Prosecutor in the Netherlands and the Office of International Affairs in the Criminal Division at the U.S. Department of Justice. The prosecutors handling the case are Justice Department Trial Attorney Gregg N. Sofer of the Counterterrorism Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney Gregg A. Maisel of the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia.

If convicted on the charges filed in the criminal complaint filed today, Delaema faces a maximum sentence of life in prison.

A criminal complaint is merely a formal charge that a defendant violated a criminal law. All defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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